THE PULLMAN MAN.

HOW HE MANAGES TO GET AHEAD OF THE INQUISITIVE SPOTTER.

The Duties of a Sleeping Car Conductor. Putting a "Porter's Mark" on a Spotter's Shoes—Raising the Accounts—On Hotel Cars—The Art of "Knocking Down."

"Yes," said an ex-member of the Pullman force, who had a run through from New York to the far west on the most frequented highways of travel, "there are great opportunities in the experience of the sleeping car man. It takes a man with a head on him to know what he is about. And I guess there are fewer of them caught in any 'monkey business' than any other set of trusted employes in the country. There are new men going on the road all the time, and those who have a predisposition to crookedness are never allowed to grow old in the ways of sin."

"So they knock down?"

"Well, that's a broad question. They don't all do it. But there is just the same chance for a Pullman man as there is for a street car conductor, but the risks are greater and he has more to lose by it. But the 'knock down' system is by no means an ancient custom. It's devious paths are known; sometimes the broad light of investigation trac s in upon them, and the man who is caught loses his head and $125 a month.

"To begin with, a sleeping car man must familiarize himself with an intricate system of single-entry bookkeeping. On every trip he carries with him a whole set of clerical apparatus for keeping his accounts. They comprise diagrams of the berths, check books, markers, accounts of receipts and blanks to make receipts out the same as a ship's manifest, and if he wants to pocket a couple of dollars, or a five, or a ten, he has to keep track of an immense amount of detail, doctor up his accounts in good shape, keep an eagle eye on the porter and run the gauntlet of spotters."

"Spotters?"

"Yes, spotters. There is a whole army of them on the road incessantly—male and female both. Pullman keeps them employed all the time. They never use passes. If they go through from New York to St. Louis, or from Boston to Washington, they buy first-class tickets, and pay for them with checks, just the same as wealthy railroad tourists. But they become known. They've got to hang around the car in day time a little, to get track of things, and a good fly porter who can't size up a spotter when he sees him ain't worth having.

TRACING THE CROOKEDNESS.

"A spotter, when he starts out to get the drop on a suspected conductor, carries along a diagram of the car and a full set of equipments. He keeps an accurate account of all berths sold or occupied between important points, and makes a return at the other end of the line. The first trace of crookedness will be followed by several more spotters following up the same conductor, until the evidence is dead against him, and then there is a sudden vacancy in the force.

"But the career of the spotter is not a path of roses. If the conductor doesn't tumble to him, the porter does in nine cases out of ten, and then that innocent spotter is marked for life.

"When he turns in at night he sticks his shoes under the lower berth. The porter comes along after a while, marks the number of the section on them, and takes them to the rear of the car to put a quarter of a dollar shine on them. The first thing the porter does is to examine them closely, and if there are no marks on the shoes, he proceeds in a calm, matter-of-fact way to "brand" them. He puts a 'porter's mark' on the shoe, that every Pullman porter from here to San Francisco will comprehend the instant he lays his eyes on it. Everywhere that spotter travels, the little hieroglyphic on his shoes does him up, and he never gets down to the cause of it. They work the women's shoes, too, when they can find them, and when they can't they mark their little caba or valise in some convenient place.

"Then the spotters have the game stocked up against themselves sometimes. If he looks like an offensive fellow, of more than the average meanness, he stands in jeopardy. The porter rakes in from $5 to $10 on an average run, and the conductor says, 'See here, George, we've got to bull the market,' and the porter knows what that means and chips in. Then the conductor makes up his accounts $10 above what they ought to be, fixes up the diagram, and punches a few more checks. When he makes his report, instead of turning in $40, he turns in $50. The spotter, who has been trained in the school of spotless virtue and unblemished truth, only makes it out $40.

MISTAKE IN THE FIGURES.

"The next thing that happened to the spotter, he is taken to the front and investigated. The manager says: 'Look here, Mr. Spotter, this thing aint right; how is it you only show up $40?'

"'That must be right,' says the spotter, feeling mysterious, and a sort of distrust in the arithmetic he studied at school.

"'Well, it ain't right—you're $10 short. We won't want you any more. We'll get somebody who can count up better,' and that spotter will never find out what happened to him, and forever lose confidence in his own intelligence. These are tricks that are vain, but those who are on the wing night and day, dashing along over the continent, don't put in their time without learning as they go. I've known men to show up tricks to Pullman himself that he never dreamed of. The old men on the road have sowed their wild oats and never need watching. It is an object for them to keep their places. But the young men were coming and going all the time, and applications are constantly made at headquarters for a 'run.' It is a good position for a young man with grit enough to keep to a straight line. It's a big experience.

"The big work can only be done on the buffet or hotel cars on a long run. That's a bonanza. A conductor has to keep an account of every article he takes out with him, brings back all the scraps and have them weighed, and return a correct account of how everything was disposed of. But they can easily knock the company's eye out for a soft thing, if they are sharp enough. A conductor is given a whole ham, which weighs so much, so many steaks and other articles. Of course, they are the best the market can give. But the porter can buy another ham for less money and stow it away, and the conductor can have a nice juicy steak cut in two. It looks hard to work all these things without detection, but they've been done, and the thing used to work like a gold mine. A hotel car conductor can get to be a stockholder in a bank before he is 50 without any trouble."—Globe-Democrat Interview.

Woolen Shirt for Summer Wear.

The woolen shirt for summer dress is all the rage just at present among the young men, and they are manufactured in such tasteful styles that for ordinary occasions they are as presentable as the stiff white. As a matter of fact, the woolen shirt is said by physicians to be the most healthful of them all, especially in this climate of sudden changes.—Chicago Herald.

Dr. Douglas, Gen. Grant's Physician.

In a flying visit to New York the other day I saw Dr. Douglas, Gen. Grant's physician. The doctor has not fully recovered from the great physical and mental strain imposed upon him by his constant attention during the whole of the last nine months of Grant's life. The doctor's hands shake still as if they were palsied. But his general look is one of great gain. Several months ago a catarrhal trouble resulted in his stomach becoming poisoned with mucus that had been beyond the power of expectoration. He overcame the difficulty by introducing a rubber tube into his throat and the passage below. Through this tube he would pass warm water so as to cleanse out the alimentary canal and stomach before eating. By this process he has regained lost flesh, and to a degree his lost health.—

WATER SCARCE IN COLORADO.

A Warning That Should Not Be Suffered to Pass Unheeded—Suggestions.

Colorado will be forced to follow in the footsteps of California in a communistic appropriation of the waters of the state for the use of its entire population. The drought of the present season, protracted through a period of three months, gives a warning that will not be suffered to pass unheeded. Colorado has even a scantier stock of water than California. The larger part of the state lies just east of the Rocky mountains, and the three rivers, South Platte, Arkansas and Rio Grade, which, with their affluents, water the country, are very insignificant streams—so small and shallow that in prolonged dry spells like the present they nearly lose their current.

Flume and ditch companies have tapped them at the base of the mountains, and drawn off the water to be sold in small streams to farmers for irrigation purposes. But this gives to the population nearest the mountains an advantage over those living further east, for it sometimes occurs in time of drought that, when the former are amply served, the river is nearly exhausted, and there is little water left for the people living lower down. In the present case, the South Platte, which runs through Denver, has been so shrunken in volume that it does not afford water enough for all purposes, and the state authorities have been forced to prohibit diversion of the water into ditches for irrigation, and allow it to be used only for drinking and stock watering. The great cattle herds are found in the eastern part of the state, at a distance from the heads of the streams, and if the streams are exhausted near the mountains by irrigating ditches and flumes, the cattle herds must suffer.

It seems to be the experience that as population, with its civilizing practices, multiplies in a new country, the rainfall diminishes; and there is not a doubt that, when the destruction of mountain forests in Colorado, Wyoming, Montana, New Mexico and Nevada shall have been completed, a scarcity of water will be a perpetual disadvantage, and the shrunken streams and lakes will have to be protected with jealous official care. Otherwise it is easy to imagine a drouth unusually protracted, in which the mountain streams, fed by snow water alone, would shrivel to rills, and the thousands of animals perish of thirst, and the populations themselves be forced to abandon the country. To prevent such a peril, the state will have to assume absolute possession of all water supplies, and hold and dispense them for the use of the people. In the course of time the population of Colorado will be a million, and when that day comes water will be a treasure to be husbanded and protected as jealously as it is in Arabia.—St. Louis Republican.

Heading Off a Prairie Fire.

A courier on a foaming mustang, followed by a herd of stampeding animals, has announced the coming of the fire, miles to windward, perhaps before even its smoke is visible. At the word "Fire!" every man on the settlement drops his work, catches his horse, seizes water buckets, blankets, ropes, cans of kerosene oil, plows, and whatever else may be of use in fighting the fire, and, throwing these into a wagon, dashes off to meet the danger. The probable course of the fiery cyclone being ascertained, a large force of men begin plowing a strip of land directly across it, for a "fire-break." Sometimes half a dozen plows, with four or more horses to each, are put simultaneously to work, turning up furrows with desperate energy.

On the windward or exposed side of this fire-break a counter fire is started by means of the ropes saturated with kerosene. This creeps along at a comparatively slow pace against the wind, to meet the greater one, which comes surging along, preceded by a scorching, furnace-like breath and a dense shower of gray ashes. On the other side of the plowed strip, toward the ranches, the grass is drenched with water, and men stand ready with wet blankets to put out the flying sparks as they alight. The rush of the approaching mass of flame and smoke is terrific. It fairly leaps ahead, 100 feet at a time, hissing, snapping and roaring as if it were laying low a forest. Suddenly it meets the back fire. The two rush together in a great billow of flame, which rises high in the air and goes out in dense black clouds of smoke. The tornado is checked, and the ranchers are saved.

This is what takes place when the work of the prairie firemen is successful. Sometimes, however, the flames, checked in front, rally and spread out anew at the sides, and continue their destructive course over more miles of prairie, until stopped by some river or desert place.—Frank Leslie's Illustrated.

Lightning in the Rocky Mountains.

The curious case of G. S. Edwards, who was struck by lightning while crossing Iron hill, at Leadville, Colo., on July 4, is attracting considerable interest among scientific men. After the flash, Mr. Edwards remained unconscious for fifteen minutes before receiving assistance. The lightning struck him on the left cheek, and after knocking out a number of his teeth passed diagonally across the breast to the right side. It then descended the body to the foot, emerging from the right boot. It passed entirely through the foot, leaving a hole similar to that made by a bullet. The clothing was torn into fragments, particles being found a distance of 200 feet. Both of the boots were entirely destroyed, and one of them carried sixty feet away.

The ground where the man was standing was torn up for a considerable distance. The course of the electric current along the body was marked by a black and red streak one and a half inches wide. The worst effect of the streak seems to have been on the lungs. A severe hemorrhage was produced, by which a quart of blood was lost. In addition to these injuries, the surface of the body was almost covered with blisters, the result of ugly burns. This, we believe, is the first authentic record of a person being injured by lightning at an elevation of 10,500 feet. It is remarkable such severe internal injuries were not followed by death.—Scientific American.

A REMARKABLE FEMALE SURGEON.

Graduating at the Age of Twenty-Six, She Goes to Egypt.

The death is announced in Cochin China of Mme. Dr. Ribart, a female surgeon of remarkable skill, and whose career was very extraordinary, an experience that no other woman has ever had. Beginning as a waitress in a little drinking shop of the Quartier Latin of Paris, she passed, while still very young, through the usual experiences of a Parisian grisette, and became connected with a medical student who frequented the shop. Her instinct was irresistible. No sooner did she come in contact with his books and instruments than she fell upon them and literally devoured the knowledge they contained. She availed herself of his teachings, too, and drew from him everything he learned, so that by the time she had reached the age of 26 she presented herself for examination as surgeon, and passed the ordeal brilliantly and triumphantly.

She soon recognized the field that lay open before her in the Egyptian harems, to which male surgeons were not admitted, and where women suffered unspeakable torments for the lack of proper attendance. At Cairo she speedily established a large practice, and had every prospect of doing well, but her habits of dissipation had been formed early, had become rooted and were unconquerable.

Her career of vice ended finally in an Egyptian madhouse, and her sufferings in that horrible place were as great as her excesses had been. After six months of this severe but salutary regimen she recovered her mind, but never forgave her heartless and disreputable Levantine friends who had hastily thrust her out of sight and mind into the horrors of an insane asylum.

Her career in Egypt was over, but she coud not return to Europe, and nothing was left her but the French possessions in Asia. She made her way out to the French colony in Cochin China. Here her talents and her beauty, which despite the life she had led in Egypt and her sufferings in the mad house, had never failed her, won her instant recognition and she in great demand among women. The old queen mother of Annam had been blind for years and hailed with delight the prospect of relief held out to her by the French physician. Mme. Ribart died suddenly the day before the operation was to be performed, the result, as supposed, of the strains upon her health which her Egyptian experiences had entailed. She was still young and had prospects of redeeming the past, for her talents in her difficult profession were great and undoubted. Probably no European woman ever knew so much of the inner life of the harem in the east and its dark side as this ex-grisette.—New York World.

Bad Chinese Boys in San Francisco.

So far reference has been had only to the older class of hoodlum Mongolians. There is another class, no less dangerous to society, to be found among the Chinese boys, many of whom are members of industrious families. The example set by the older roughs is imitated as closely as it is possible for those of tender age to follow in the footsteps of their elder "cousins." To be bad, thoroughly and irrevocably bad, is their highest ambition. They pick up American profanity readily, and use it with a freedom and frequency that would drive the most depraved American hoodlum to despair. But it is not on their proficiency in the use of oaths or filthy language that the young pagans rest their reputation for wickedness. It affords them a certain pleasure to mingle with the Sunday school youths of their own race and fire-off a few bombshells of profanity now and then, while the Christianized Mongolians raise their eyes in holy horror. But this is only fleeting joy.

To sport a weapon of offense in the shape of a knife or pistol, and to display it on all occasions when the eye of the police is not upon them, is a pleasure smacking more of delightful outlawry, and it is enjoyed to the full by the bad young man in Chinatown. A knife having a four-inch blade and a short, thick handle—one of those wicked looking knives that cut both ways and must be carried in a leather sheath—is the delight of the Mongolian hoodlum. The sheath is generally fastened to a strap about the waist, and is concealed from view by the outer garments. Such knives have been found in the possession of Chinese hoodlums under 10 years of age. It is, indeed, doubtful if the majority of the class under discussion do not carry a weapon of this kind, and sometimes two or three, with a pistol to boot. The more closely he resembles a walking arsenal the better the young pagan is pleased with himself, for he can then easily convince the Chinatown residents that he is a very, very bad young man.—San Francisco Chronicle.

Shanghai's Population and Climate.

The population of Shanghai is 500,000 Chinese and 4,000 of all other nationalities, including about 1,100 British males, 250 each of Germans and Frenchmen, and 125 registered American citizens, the rest being women, children, Japanese and Bagdad Jews. These figures are taken from the census of last year. The climate varies from skating in the months of January and February, with marrow-freezers from the northern plateau, to over 90 degrees day and night for a spell, perhaps, of a week in July and August, the thermometer standing as high as 140 out in the street at midday and going sometimes a little higher when a sandstorm from the far-off desert of Gobi sweeps by. Heavy and frequent rains fall all the year round, and the tail end of a typhoon will now and then uproot a few trees and blow the corners off buildings. Shocks of earthquake are sometimes a cause of excitement, but these are not nearly as frequent or severe as in Japan.

Shanghai is the home of the musquito, being specially noted for a striped kind called the "tiger," of peculiar ferocity and stinging power. The centipede of these parts is likewise unpleasant, not to say dangerous, and not by any means a desirable bedfellow. September is the mortality month, a hot westerly wind prevailing, which is laden with the pestiferous exhalations from over a country covered with corpses exposed to the summer sun, it, of course, being known that the Chinese in this district do not bury their dead. Dying goes on at a fair rate all the time, but in September and October the undertaker has to close his photographic gallery in order to give undivided attention to the more serious and paying business of arranging and boxing dead bodies. Seven years is considered the maximum term which a man of the best constitution should spend in China without a trip home.—Cor. San Francisco Chronicle.

Girl Graduate's Essay on Patriotism.

One of the sweet girl graduates who recently skipped out of school life bedecked in gauze and almost smothered in flowers lavished upon her by admiring friends, read an essay on "Love of Country." After quoting the entire well remembered lines beginning

"Breathes there a man with soul so dead"

she added about a dozen prose lines of her own composition, in the course of which she said that "patriotism was real nice." It is reported that the dignified professor, to whom the essay was originally handed for inspection, after noting the amount of poetry quoted, turned to his fair young pupil and exclaimed: "My dear, it seems to me that you have borrowed a pretty big porch for a mighty small house.—Chicago Herald.

LIFE IN A COW CAMP.

The Romance of a Cowboy Sifted Down to Hard Pan—"Third Relief."

The heavy wagon stands two or three rods from the stream, and between it and the bank are scattered the sleeping men, each bed wrapped in a white tarpaulin. Saddled horses are picketed near the wagon, and when they hear the bell horse move with the grazing remuda they straighten the long ropes that lie snake-like among the buffalo grass and cactus and neigh to their partners in the distant cavvy, for almost every horse has a partner, usually in the same string he works in. At 12 o'clock a rider comes into camp on a keen run, rolls stiffly from his horse, pulls the tarpaulins from over two of the sleeping men and arouses each with the words, "Third relief."

Each man as he is called springs from his bed as if he had been wide awake, pulls on his boots and coat, buckles on his spurs, takes his bridle out of his bed—for a cow boy's bed is his harness room and portmanteau—catches up his hat, flips his tarpaulin back over his bed, and stumbles off over the rough prairie to where his night horse is staked. Three movements of his hands and the horse is bridled and free from the rope.

The rider lurches up in the saddle, rouses the sleepy broncho with a touch of the steel, and, followed by his partner on guard, disappears in the soft dusty night. He listens for the lowing of the restless cattle, and when he has located the sound pushes on at full speed. Reaching the bunch, he gives a hoarse word to the weary man who is so glad to see him, and then, reining the horse to a walk, lights his pipe, pulls his coat up around his throat and slowly rides around the herd, meeting his partner, who rides in the opposite direction, at every half circuit. The relieved man hurries to camp and finds the fire blazing over a log his partner, who came in to call the relief, has thrown upon it. He slips over to the wagon, takes a cup of water from the bucket, gives a sigh of relief as he wets his throat, dry with the dust of two hours on the trampled bed grounds, shivers as the cold water reaches his stomach, turns to warm himself at the fire, then decides that he is too sleepy, and rolls himself in his heavy blankets. Meantime the two men on guard are riding their monotonous circuit, singing hoarsely as they ride—for a man has to sing to the cows at night, or his sudden approach will startle some nervous yearling, who will perhaps stampede the herd.—Cheyenne Leader.

A Morning at a Country House.

Breakfast is a delightful hour in England, for it is informal. Servants are often dispensed with altogether; people come in when they choose, no one waiting for another, and you may select your neighbor if you are in time. The women are fresh and simple in toilet, the sportsmen in knickerbockers and shooting suits, ready for the occupation of the day. In some houses the host and hostess sit at opposite ends of the long table, and one pours the tea and the other the coffee; in other mansions neither the host nor hostess is visible before lunch time. The table is spread only with fruit and bread, and possibly cold sweets, jellies and marmalade; perhaps a young lady of the family sits behind an egg boiler and cooks eggs for her friends; but the substantial meats, hot and cold, are on the sideboard, and the men get up and forage for the ladies and themselves. The viands, of course, are abundant and delectable. An English breakfast is always substantial. In Scotland oatmeal porridge is never absent.

The mail often arrives in the morning, and the letters may be at your plate when you come down. Or perhaps the bag is late, and the "post," as they call it, is brought into the room and distributed. Everybody opens and reads without any formality or excuse; they exchange news, receive invitations or regrets and make arrangements for the day. Those who finish first leave when they will. Perhaps the visit of some guest is over; he makes his adieus at the table, and the party saunter to the windows to see him drive off. For the dining room is always on the ground floor; you can step from the windows to the terrace or the lawn.—Adam Badeau's Letter.

An Unexpected Result—No. 1.

At Paetigorsk, in the southern Caucasus, there is a lovely valley that has become the favorite winter resort of the Russian empire. In one of the forty hotels a French doctor had established his office, but was expelled last March for an "indiscreet communication" to a Paris journal. The obnoxious correspondence referred to one of his patients, a hollow-eyed editor, who every now and then was prostrated by a fit of spasmodic asthma, complicated by symptoms not easy to explain till he be handed his medical friend the following dispatches, received from his assistant in a censor ridden city of central Russia: No. 1. "On receipt of your last Sp. (the censor) threatened me with personal violence and had to be pacified at an expense of twenty-five rubles. Shall I repeat your request?" No. 2. "Sp. declines to grant imprimatur (permission to publish) except on conditions specified by mail. I write to-day." No. 3. "Sp. has just borrowed all the money in the office and promised to grant imprimatur." No. 4. "Sp. has got drunk and revoked his promise. Oblige me by further instructions."—Dr. Felix L. Oswald.

Several Oddities of Spain.

Among other peculiar Spanish institutions the lottery is prominent. In every city there are numerous offices for the sale of tickets, and in addition men and women go about the streets hawking them, and calling attention to their wares by vociferous outcries like other street peddlers. I think the lotteries are under control of the government, and are doubtless fairly conducted. If one can judge by the number of opportunities afforded to buy tickets, they are well patronized and popular.

Another odd thing is that wineshops and restaurants and hotels never keep cigars for sale, and that you cannot buy postage stamps at the postoffice. If you want either of these useful articles you must go to a government tobacco shop for them. They are both royal monopolies and they go together. If the stamps are as poor and as weak as the cigars I should think they would.—Cor. Detroit Free Press.

Nine Kings and Queens of Spain.

There are at the present time, including the Carlist dynasty in parti us, no fewer than nine kings and queens of Spain. First, there is the infant king upon the throne, and his mother the queen regent; then come the ex-Queen Isabella and her husband, King Francis; thirdly, the ex-King Amadeo, brother of the king of Italy; and lastly, the four Carlists—Don Juan III and his queen, Dona Beatrix of Este, the former of whom abdicated a few years ago in favor of his son Don Carlos, who, with his wife, Dona Margaret, makes up the total. An anecdote is told of the ex-King Amadeo paying a visit to the ex-Queen Isabella in Paris a few years ago, when Don Carlos was announced, whereupon Amadeo took his leave, observing with a smile, "I don't think three sovereigns of Spain ought to be in one room."—Vanity Fair.

Origin of Pink Hunting Coats.

It is said that Lady Hasketh, of California origin, was the first to introduce the fashion among the English ladies of wearing pink hunting coats. The origin of this fashion appears to have been profoundly agitating London society for some time past.—New York Graphic.

ENDYMION.

How slowly falls yon sickle from on high
Through evening's silent sky,
Flashing a splendor from its curved blade
On the low-lying shade!

Now in and out the narrow cloud that bars
Its pathway from the stars
It slips, and with a golden glory shines,
Nearing the mountain lines.

Nay, 'tis no sickle which some unseen hand
Lets fall upon the land;
It is the jewel of a lady's crown,
As she steps lightly down.

Night after night, down the aerial stair
She stealeth unaware;
Leaving the empire which she ruleth above,
And all her state, for love.

Behold, her feet have touched the rocky steeps
Where the young shepherd sleeps,
And larger burns her jewel as she moves
In search of him she loves.

And now it fades, and glimmers, and is gone.
Happy Endymion!
While here the world in sudden shadow lies,
She bends above his eyes.

—Atlantic Monthly.

Care of a Tramp's Hands.

"One of the essential points of success in my profession," said a dilapidated old tramp who was talking to a reporter from behind the bars of one of the cells in the city jail this morning, "is to keep the hands in good order. You don't understand what I mean, eh? What I mean by keeping the hands in good order is this: Of course, in tramping from town to town, a man is liable to be arrested for vagrancy at any time. He must tell a story of how he has just been thrown out of work and is looking for employment, which, as yet, he has not been able to find. In nine cases out of ten the judge will ask him to show up his hands, and when he does produce them they must be horny and toilworn. Catch on, do you?

"So you see it is part of my business to keep my hands looking as though they belonged to a man who was accustomed to work 365 days in the year. For that purpose I carry with me this small piece of hickory wood, which is round and very smooth. About twice a day I take it between my palms and rub them so that the friction will make them hard and callous. In that way, you see, I produce the 'real result' with very little trouble and annoyance. There is a bottle of brown liquid which I use occasionally for staining the back part of my hands a beautiful sunbrown color, and there you are. When I show up my hands and tell the judge that I am a hard working man, thrown out of employment by the strikes, what can he do but believe me? The trick has saved me many a day in jail, and I flatter myself is a strictly original idea, though it is spreading rapidly. The profession, you see, is beginning to realize that it will never do to show up to a hard-hearted police judge a pair of tender, lily-white hands."—Ohama Bee.

In Favor of the Darwin Theory.

A Washington street orthopedic artist, speaking with me to-day about trusses and hernia, told me of a queer suggestion made to him a few days ago by a prominent Chicago Unitarian minister who called on him to see about a truss for another person. In the course of the conversation the fact had been commented upon that hernia was not, properly speaking, a rupture at all. Whenever there is a weakness in the muscles of the lower abdomen, and an interstice occurs, even three-quarters of an inch in diameter, the peritoneum, or sack which contains the intestines, forces its way through the orifice, and, little by little the intestines follow, making an outside bunch.

When this was explained to the divine, who was, of course, an ardent disciple of Darwin, his eyes became fixed on the floor for a few moments in deep thought, and then, his countenance lighting up with the joy of a new discovery, he said to the truss man: "By the way, has it never occurred to you that this weakness in the muscles of the abdomen, which exists in one out of every seven men that walk the earth, resulted from the human family straightening up and becoming bipeds instead of quadrupeds? It seems to me that we have a great argument here for the descent of man from the lower animals." The truss man says it may be so for all he knows. Horses, dogs, cats, and even canary birds are often ruptured, but in their case it can always be traced to accident and mechanical force, not to congenital weakness.—Chicago Journal.

Of Pill and Ointment Celebrity.

Whether the late Mr. Holloway, of pill and ointment celebrity, did good in his lifetime with his pills and ointment may be disputed by doctors and patients; but there can be no question about his doing good after his death. He left a handsome sum of money to found an asylum for better class lunatics, as you may know, and besides that, being much impressed with the necessity of a higher education for women, left $3,500,000 to build and endow a grand college for 450 girls of the upper middle class. The building is said to cover more ground than any college in the world. Every girl will have a bedroom and a study to her self. Lovely grounds, laid out in terraces and tennis lawns, surround the building, and many of the gentlemen who went down the other day to a private view of the place, previous to the opening of it by the queen, would not have objected to be turned into girl students just for a few years, and peacefully study and live in a place so well worth living in. Her majesty commanded that the epithet of "royal" should be applied to the college at once, instead of after the opening ceremony, as is usual. Seldom indeed did an establishment better deserve the title.—Max O'Rell's London Letter.

Sheep Washing Has Got to Go.

That picturesque rural rite, sheep washing, has got to go. Indeed it has gone, to a great extent, already. The Wool Journal says it does not know a single argument in its favor. The practice was inaugurated at an early day, and it is a relic of old times, when the wool shorn from the small flocks in the eastern states was largely used up at home. Then it was necessary to wash either before or after shearing, to prepare it for carding or spinning. Those days are past, and both the sheep and their owners ought to be glad of it.—Exchange.

The Ex-Khedive's Wicked old Mother.

The mother of ex-Khedive Ismail Pasha, who died a few days ago at Cairo, was one of the most wicked old women imaginable. She was noted for her depravity, and the men who once entered her palace at the Abbassieh, just outside of Cairo, never emerged therefrom again. On several occasions her carriage was pelted with stones and she herself mobbed by crowds of women, some of whom demanded their sons, others their husbands and brothers. Latterly she had become exceedingly devout.—Chicago Tribune.

The Poetry of Dr. O. W. Holmes.

Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes' verse is quite harmless and full of common sense and flippancy. They range from commemoration odes to valentines, and are excellent examples of what poetry ought to be.—Vanity Fair.

The average cost of a contested English election is $3,000.

HOME OF THE BANANA.

HOW THE POPULAR FRUIT IS SHIPPED AND TRANSPORTED.

Growth of the Banana Traffic—Risks of the Trade—Varieties of the Plantain. Value of an Acre of Bananas—The Crop—How to Cook Them.

A few weeks ago I stood under a bunch of ripe bananas hanging from a beam in a house in Catacamas, one of the most thrifty of Olancho pueblos. As a personal favor the Indian owner of the house suspended for a moment operations on the bedstead he was hewing out of solid mahogany, and sold the fruit to me for two reals. That was equal to twenty cents of American money. I can prove that the fruit was paid for, for a dozen witnesses saw the whole transaction, and laughed at my companion when he jauntily caught hold of one end of the bunch, and let go to get a better hold. He had not expected that the thing would weigh nearly or quite 100 pounds. The comandante, in whose house we lodged, assured us, when we had lugged the bunch to his dining room, that the cabinetmaker was a sharp rascal, in that he had charged us twice as much as would have been an ample price. "But," he reflected, philosophically, "you must pay for being Americanos and strangers." As it was too late we tried to not mourn too deeply the loss of our ten cents, and ate the fully ripe, mealy, sweet fruit. Many a time before and after that I bought bananas for two to four centavos a dozen.

Considerable quantities of fruit are brought from Nicaragua, but about the middle of May quarantine regulations forbade the entrance of vessels from ports on the east coast of that country without passing a very close examination and undergoing considerable delay at the quarantine stations. Any detention would be most injurious to a fruit so perishable as are bananas, plantains, mangoes and other tropical fruits. A few days in quarantine in hot weather would be as fatal to fruit in a vessel's hold as Yellow Jack would be to a patient on whom it had a hold; therefore craft trading to suspected regions refused to receive cargoes of fruit. They could not afford to risk losses. That kept out of the market a large quantity of fruit.

DOOM OF THE POOL.

For years two houses in New Orleans practically monopolized the fruit trade of the coast of Spanish Honduras, the islands thereabout, and of that little neck of Guatemala which separates Spanish from British Honduras. Competition between the two firms was raising prices, so they pooled their issues and divided the trade between them. That worked nicely, and prices were jammed down by the traders, because they "take all the chances, ye see," and leave the planter none. But one bright day an ugly black smoke away to the northward heralded the approach of the Maria P. and the doom of the pool. The steamer is owned by a firm of much enterprise and with money galore, so she harvested nearly all of the fruit then ready for shipment. Every bunch of bananas, every plantain, every cocoanut, every mango, and all the oranges, lemons and limes the officers of the Maria P. could buy were promptly secured, stowed away in her hold, and contracts made for ensuing trips. When the old line steamers arrived there was not half a load for them, so they were filled with profanity by their officers. The planters seemed to really enjoy the situation, which was unkind of them.

Of the musa or plantain there are a great number of sorts; some cultivators claim that they have eighty different kinds, but only two or three varieties are known in the markets of the United States. The variety popularly known in the West Indies and in the several Central American republics as platinos, or plantains, are seen in very few places in the United States outside of New Orleans. The sorts generally recognized in the states as bananas are either red or yellow, but the fruit is found in all shades produced by the mixture of the two colors named. By far the greater part of the bananas brought to this country are eaten raw, but they may be cooked in several ways. Fried in butter they are excellent food; baked in the skins they resemble delicious pears; boiled they are palatable; dried after fully ripening they form a sweet paste, and in every form they are very nutritious—far more so than bread. The tender young plants are boiled and eaten as asparagus is.

AN ACRE OF BANANAS.

Scientists declare that an acre of bananas produces vastly more nutritious food than an acre of wheat or of potatoes will. Cattle, horses, goats, pigs and poultry join man in his liking for this fruit, without which many a family would be on short commons much of the time. It is to dwellers in the tropics what the potato has become to the Irish. No wonder that belief was accorded to the story that the plantain was the forbidden fruit Eve invited Adam to share with her, and that it was the "grapes" that the spies brought away from the Promised Land. If plantains grew in Canaan the eagerness of the Israelites to gobble the whole country is satisfactorily accounted for.

The usefulness of the plant does not end with the feeding of man and beast. The leaves furnish an excellent thatch, and the stalks supply a large quantity of fiber of great strength and varying degrees of fineness. Some of this fiber is so exceedingly fine that an entire garment made of it may be hidden in the hand. But, notwithstanding the many uses to which the plantain may be put, and its almost incalculable value as food, not one person in ten thousand who would probably become regular consumers ever buys a banana or has ever seen a plantain. There is plenty of room for the expansion of the business of growing the fruit and some reason for thinking that it will increase, for the business is said to be fairly profitable now that refrigerator cars and cold storage on steamers have made it possible to carry the most perishable tropical productions to most remote parts of the United States and to Europe.

The cost of preparing a plantation of plantains or bananas is said to be about $15 per acre. Nine months after the shoots are stuck into the ground the first crop is ready for shipment, and from that time on bunches are continually maturing. New plants spring up to take the place of the old stalks, which die after producing a single bunch each of fruit. The bunches weigh from thirty to eighty pounds. Stems having less than six "hands" or half-circles of fruit are rejected by the buyers for market as being too small to be worth the thirty-five to fifty cents they pay on the coast. The vessels in the trade can carry from 20,000 to 40,000 bunches, and the bunches sell in New Orleans for about a dollar more than they cost on the coast. The plants are set about sixteen feet apart, and receive little or no care after the planting until the time comes to cut the larger bunches and to cut down all the young plants not wanted. The dead stalks, with all their valuable fiber, are left to rot on the ground.—"E. W. P.," in Chicago Times.

Singular Relic of the Flood.

A singular and beautiful relic of the flood last summer is the crop of daisies that it sowed through the bottom lands of Kansas. Some sections are dotted thickly with these flowers, and as they were never known to grow before it seems certain that the seeds were brought down by the flood.—Chicago Herald.

The Latest London Craze.

The very latest London craze in note paper is of a coarse brown quality, such as might be used for doing up heavy bundles. The edges are rough, while at the top of the first page is an illustration of an old shoe, and surrounding it are these words: "Hard times! Never desert an old friend!" while under the same motto on the envelope is the picture of an old battered hat. The thing just now is to assume a poverty if you have it not.—St. Paul Pioneer Press.

Color Blindness.

Women have acuter color sense and are seldom color blind, but when they are defective they often transmit it, mainly in the female line.

Color blindness is, as a rule, congenital and hereditary, and for that reason, incurable. Of course temporary color blindness, such as occurs in hysteria or head injuries, need not be irremediable.—Lithographer and Printer.

Loggers In the Dismal Swamp.

A correspondent of The New York Evening Post took a trip through the famous Dismal swamp. The Post says that 2,000 negroes are logging in that pestilential place, who are worse off than when they were slaves, because now they barely make a living, and there is no one to take care of them in sickness or old age.

Poetic View of Cremation.

A poetess sees beauty in everything, and Ella Wheeler Wilcox has discovered it in cremation. Just hear her: "Snowy clothing envelops it—the body—the door swings noiselessly open, the iron cradle that appears like a nuptial bed disappears in a glory of crimson light as a dove flies into the crimson sunlight and disappears from view.—New York World.

Green Roses.

A botanical curiosity in a garden at Ealing, England, is a rose tree whose blossoms are entirely green, the flowers, in fact, being composed of similar leaves to the ordinary foliage. This is evidently a reversion to the earlier stage of terrestrial plant life, in which flowers had not yet become specialized organs.—Arkansaw Traveler.

Present for Nilsson.

Among the wedding presents received by Christine Nilsson is one from Queen Victoria, consisting of a photograph of her majesty in an exquisitely carved oxidized silver frame. Beneath the portrait is a small autograph signature, "Victoria, Reg., Osborne, June 14, 1886.—Chicago Tribune.

"'Frisco" Not the Name.

San Francisco papers indignantly disclaim the popular belief that "'Frisco," instead of the full name "San Francisco," is used by by Californians. They say that the only people who use it are those who come from the east, and think it is a "disgusting term."—Chicago Times.

Imperfect Vision of Insects.

From many experiments on flies, beetles and other insects, M. Plateau concludes that insects with compound eyes, with or without simple eyes, are able to distinguish form by vision only very imperfectly, if at all.—Boston Budget.

White House Experiences.

Mrs. Grant has, I understand, dictated many of her White House experiences to a stenographer, and they will probably be published some time.—Washington Letter.

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